

DUXBURY
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

(Here are excerpts of the annual report of the Duxbury Rural & Historical Society, Inc., submitted by Fred Potter, the new president. -- Ed.)

We are happy to report excellent attendance at our five general meetings. In October, 1972, David Little spoke on "The First Centennial," a delightful description of the tremendous effort made by Concord and Lexington 100 years ago. Dr. Eugene Clark entertained an overflow audience in November with his talk and slides on "Serimshaw." At the May 1973 meeting, Dr. Gaupp of Sandwich explained humorously the p's and q's of antique collecting. Abbott Cummings in June, gave an illustrated talk on "The Preservation Movement in New England." As Director of SPNEA, he was in position to make his talk informative and interesting. At the annual meeting, Dorothy Wentworth, our town historian, told us with a light touch of the fascinating backgrounds of some of the properties now owned by our society. A year of programs too good to miss.

Of events there have been many others: In May, a bus load rode to Mystic Seaport and enjoyed a lovely Spring day there; 4 "King Caesar Morning" lectures were given in the barn to capacity audiences. The speakers were James Deetz, on recent archaeological finds near Plymouth, Jonathan Fairbanks on some of the New England antiques at the Museum of Fine Arts, John Tastian on the history of Oriental rugs, and then, Dorothy Wentworth on the King Caesar Weston shipbuilding and shipping "empire." Fine and well-received programs.

On Aug. 19, the Clark's Island Picnic, rained out in July, was held. In over 40 boats of all descriptions, more than 200 persons picnicked on the lawns and then attended the rewarding service at Election Rock, led by the Rev. Stephen Turrell of Pilgrim Church.

At long last, the Capt. Gershom Bradford house and grounds have been restored to a point where the house could be especially opened for a gathering of the Governor Bradford Compact and a week later, on 2 August afternoons for members. Those who came found it representative of a cultured family of that day. Further openings will be held next summer.

While a good deal remains to be done, generous gifts to date, have made possible much of the restoration of the house and its paintings as well as the installation of protective systems, while equally generous donations of time and muscle have greatly improved the grounds, as you will see when you pass.

A major project, publication of "Settlement and Growth of Duxbury 1628-1870" by Dorothy Wentworth, has been successfully launched by the society. By Dec. 1 about 1300 books will have been sold of a printing of 1965, or 66 percent. When all copies are sold, the society should realize a small net excess of revenue. The book, interesting and easy reading, is beautifully designed and has received only favorable comment.

Duxbury Clipper, Thursday, January 3, 1974

With "Cedarfield" on Clark's Island, we inherited a large portrait of Dr. Neilson, former president of Smith College, painted by Elizabeth Taylor Watson, an aunt of Sarah Wingate Taylor. Last winter, the Smith Class of '28 asked whether it might have the portrait to present to the college at their 45th last June. We agreed, went to the Island in March for the painting and delivered it to a young New York artist who was to restore it where necessary. It was completed, taken to Smith on time and was the center of much interest at Commencement. Friends of Sarah Wingate Taylor, their classmate, donated a substantial sum in her memory, which has been applied to the recent re-roofing of the ell of "Cedarfield." A happy answer to the question of what to do with the painting.

Just after you cross the Eagle's Nest Creek Bridge on your way to the Standish Shore, you will see on your right a recently-repaired split rail fence surrounding a neatly trimmed triangular lot. This is Society property, which by the collaboration of some hard working members of the society with some from the Standish Shore Improvement Society, has been given a great lift in appearance. Fine job.

Due to the unfortunate failure

of Mildred Collins' health, our friends, the Collinses, have had to leave King Caesar house. We wish them well and shall miss their gracious and understanding help. We have been lucky in obtaining successors quickly, Mr. and Mrs. William Wheelock of Winchester. They took up residence as Curators on Oct. 31. They have many friends in Duxbury already and know our town as visitors. You will enjoy knowing them.